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S E C R E T 280945Z OCT 72 [REDACTED]

CITE SAIGON 2094

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PRIORITY HEADQUARTERS.

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1. ON 28 OCTOBER (LOCAL) AMBASSADOR BUNKER GAVE ME HIS FILE ON MESSAGES ON PRIVACY LINK BETWEEN HIM AND THE WHITE HOUSE AND ASKED THAT WE REVIEW TRANSLATION OF VIETNAMESE TEXT PERTAINING TO ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE TO BE CALLED NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD.

25X1 (THIS WAS ABLY ACCOMPLISHED BY [REDACTED] STAFF.)

2. THE PURPOSE OF ABOVE WAS TO PROVIDE AMBASSADOR WITH AN INDEPENDENT JUDGMENT ON THE CURRENT POINTS OF CONTROVERSY BETWEEN OUR SIDE AND THIEU AND TO DETERMINE WHETHER THESE DIFFERENCES COULD POSSIBLY BE THE RESULT OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS OR MISINTERPRETATIONS OR WHETHER THEY ARE THE RESULT OF SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCES ON ISSUES.

3. MY CONCLUSIONS WERE THAT WE ARE CONFRONTED WITH SUBSTANTIVE AS WELL AS SEMANTIC ISSUES. THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES INVOLVE THE STSTATUS OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCED

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IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND HANOI'S MISREPRESENTATIONS REGARDING THE SCOPE OF AGREEMENTS WITH KISSINGER. THE SEMANTIC ISSUE CENTERS ON THE VIETNAMESE WORDING OF THE PROVISIONS FOR THE "ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE". IT APPEARS THAT THE VIETNAMESE TEXTS CIRCULATED DO NOT CONVEY THE MEANING WHICH DR. KISSINGER HAS AGREED TO, BUT CONTRARY TO KISSINGER'S UNDERSTANDING REFLECT MORE OF A GOVERNMENTAL CONCEPT, WHICH OF COURSE HAS BEEN AND REMAINS COMPLETE ANATHEMA TO THIEU.

4. AT AMBASSADOR'S REQUEST I HAVE DRAFTED THE FOLLOWING FOR INCLUSION IN HIS MESSAGE TO WHITE HOUSE FOLLOWING MEETING WITH THIEU 28 OCTOBER:

BEGIN QUOTE: IN ALL FAIRNESS, WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT PRESIDENT THIEU'S ATTITUDE IS UNDOUBTEDLY INFLUENCED BY THE INTELLIGENCE HE IS RECEIVING ON THE ENEMY'S INTENTIONS AND BY THE GUIDANCE WHICH HANOI AND THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT ARE PROVIDING TO THEIR CADRE IN SOUTH VIETNAM. ON 25 OCTOBER, PROVINCE LEVEL CADRE WERE TOLD THAT ALTHOUGH THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF THE VIET CONG HAS NOT BEEN ATTAINED AND "THE PUPPET GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM WAS NOT DESTROYED", THE "U.S. WAR OF AGGRESSIONS" WAS BROUGHT TO AN END, AND THAT FAVOR-

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ABLE CONDITIONS HAVE BEEN CREATED FOR THE ELIMINATION OF THE "PUPPET GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM". IN GUIDANCE WHICH IS DATED 21 OCTOBER, HANOI CLAIMS THAT THE U.S. HAS ACKNOWLEDGED THE NEED FOR A FORM OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION GOVERNMENT REPEAT GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENTS THAT WILL BE SIGNED. THIS IS, OF COURSE, COMPLETELY CONTRARY TO OUR OWN UNDERSTANDING BUT WE MUST NOTE THAT WHILE WE SPEAK IN THE ENGLISH TEXT OF THE PROPOSED AGREEMENTS OF AN "ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE", THE VIETNAMESE TEXT AVAILABLE TO THE GVN AND TO THE VIET CONG USE THE THE TERM "GOVERNMENT". THIS IS NOT MERELY A QUESTION OF SEMANTICS, BUT GOES TO THE HEART OF THE ISSUE AS PRESIDENT THIEU SEES IT. THE MOST RECENT COSVN GUIDANCE AT HAND ALSO STATES THAT "OUR ARMY AND GOVERNMENT WILL REMAIN IN SOUTH VIETNAM. THE CEASE-FIRE IN PLACE WILL BE VERY PROFITABLE TO US BECAUSE IT ALLOWS US TO MAINTAIN A TOOTH-COMB OR LEOPARD SKIN POSTURE IN SOUTH VIETNAM." ACCORDING TO TWO COSVN LEVEL CADRE THE U.S. HAS RECOGNIZED THE 17TH PARALLEL AS ONLY TEMPORARY BOUNDARY AND, THEREFORE, THE U.S. CANNOT DEMAND THAT NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS BE WITHDRAWN TO NORTH VIETNAM.

AS MAY BE SEEN FROM THE ABOVE, THERE IS A SERIOUS DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THE AMERICAN POSITION AS EXPLAINED TO THIEU

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BY OUR SIDE AND THE ALLEGED AMERICAN POSITION AS REFLECTED IN THE ENEMY'S DOCUMENTS. THE PROBLEM MAY PARTLY BE ONE OF LANGUAGE, BUT IT IS MORE LIKELY THAT THERE IS A STRONG ELEMENT OF COMMUNIST DUPLICITY TO WHICH THIEU IS RESPONDING AS ONE MIGHT EXPECT. END QUOTE.

5. THE CURRENT STATE OF THE PLAY:

A. THIEU IS DEMANDING EXPLANATION OF ALLEGED MESSAGES FROM PRESIDENT NIXON TO HANOI OF WHICH HE NOT INFORMED.

B. THIEU HOLDING FAST THAT SOME PROVISIONS MUST BE MADE FOR WITHDRAWAL OF NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES;

C. THIEU INSISTS, WITH APPARENT FULL BACKING OF VIETNAMESE POLITICAL AND PUBLIC OPINION, THAT TEXTS PERTAINING TO NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CONCORD AND RECONCILIATION MUST BE REDRAFTED TO REFLECT THE INTENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE, AS WAS AGREED TO, AS OPPOSED TO A GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE.

D. KISSINGER IS EXPECTED TO HAVE ANOTHER ROUND OF SECRET TALKS WITH HANOI, PROBABLY ON 31 OCTOBER IN PARIS, AFTER REJECTING SOVIET PROPOSAL TO HOLD SECRET SESSION

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26 OCTOBER IN HANOI.

E. I WOULD NOT VENTURE TO PREDICT WHAT WILL COME OUT OF 31 OCTOBER MEETINGS OR WHAT WILL HAPPEN THEREAFTER.

6. I MAY ADD THAT I THINK THAT HANOI HAS PULLED A "FAST ONE" ON KISSINGER WHO UNDER OBVIOUS PRESSURE TO CONCLUDE AGREEMENT APPEARS TO HAVE ACCEPTED ON FAITH "ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE" FORMULATION IN ENGLISH WITHOUT CHECKING MEANING OF VIETNAMESE TEXT IN INDEPENDENT TRANSLATION. WHILE IT MAY BE FELT THAT THIS INVOLVES SEMANTICS, IT ALSO BRINGS INTO PLAY QUESTION OF ORIENTAL FACE, AND MAY BE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO RESOLVE THAN THE TROOP WITHDRAWAL ISSUE ON WHICH INTELLIGENCE SUGGESTS THERE MAY BE SOME "GIVE" ON PART OF HANOI. THIEU IS ALSO VERY BITTER ABOUT ALLEGED NIXON-HANOI MESSAGE EXCHANGE, WHICH I SUSPECT DID TAKE PLACE.

7. AS STATED IN SAIGON 2077, 22 OCTOBER, WE HAVE ARRIVED AT A REAL CRUNCH IN U.S./GVN RELATIONS BUT ON ISSUES QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE WHICH ARE BEING SURFACED IN PRESS. PARADOXICALLY, EVEN WITH ABOVE PROBLEM AREAS, KISSINGER HAS COME UP WITH A REMARKABLE DEAL WHICH ON BALANCE SHOULD PROVE VERY ADVANTAGEOUS TO SOUTH VIETNAM. E2, IMPDET,

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OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

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Remarks:

George

For your private info

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FOLD HERE TO RETURN TO SENDER

FROM: NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NO.

DATE

DCI

30 Oct